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Murder of
Caroline H Cutter.

MURDER OF CAROLINE H. CUTTER

BY THE

Baptist Ministers and Baptist Churches.

Much has been said relative to the controversy which took place in the Baptist churches in Nashua, in 1838. I purpose now to communicate some of the leading facts connected with the origin and progress of that unhappy affair. In the spring of 1836, Rev. D. D. Pratt, originated the plan, in connection with Geo. W. Wilson, of building a 2d Baptist meeting house. Mr. Pratt commenced sounding the male members of his church.—He visited them in *person*, persuaded most of them to subscribe for stock in the house. He did the same to the female members of his church who worked in the factory. For the truth of the above statement, I refer to Moses Gould, Lorenzo Dow, John Howe and others. Mr. Pratt laid the matter before his church. The action of the church to sustain the scheme was put on the church records by Pratt himself. Mr. Pratt was the committee to get the act of incorporation. Mr. Pratt was on the committee to draft the Bye Laws. The records of the incorporation show the last statement to be true. Before the meeting house was erected Mr. Pratt commenced speculating in the meeting house stock. This he did by buying stock at a *discount* of Cyrus S. Barnes then a member of his church. (1) Both before and after this purchase of Barnes, Mr. Pratt persuaded girls in the factory to buy stock at the full price. The following persons, with others, subscribed for stock in the meeting house and did not pay for their stock when the money was called for, to wit: Dea. Edwin Chase, Dea. D. W. Jones, Dea. Albert Adams, Dea. Caleb Gage, Joel Brown, and many others. (2) Their delinquencies amounted to more than two thousand dollars. To meet this delinquency Pratt persuaded me to hire money of sundry persons to relieve the *brethren*. This I did under a specified agreement as to time and conditions. I gave my own note to Wm. Wallace of Milford and others for this money. In this I was obeying the Scripture, "bear ye one another's burdens." My engagements to Pratt and the Baptist society I have fulfilled to the letter and spirit. I defy any one to show to the contrary. While I was relieving the brethren by giving my name for money, Pratt and Wilson were engaged in speculating out of poor members of Pratt's church. Pratt has stated many times that he had

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nothing to do with the building of the second Baptist house.— This statement of Pratt's is *untrue.* I can show this statement to be false by the records above mentioned, and individuals named. Thus the house was finished. At the expiration of one year, the money hired, for which I had given my note, was called for. Wm. Wallace, after a delay of some months, left his note with Abbot & Fox for immediate collection, and notified me by letter of this determination. I applied to Pratt and other members who were engaged in getting the money with me to see it paid according to agreement. I negociated with them from January until June. Although I had given some hundred dollars in this concern, I offered to give two hundred and fifty dollars more, and pay the debt of the society. I offered to lend my name with their names to hire the money for the society. I proposed to see the remainder cancelled if they would assume the Milford liability of $450. I offered to refer this matter to a committee of Baptist ministers. (3) With neither of the above named propositions would they comply. Mr. Pratt, Wilson, and Brown told me in a christian manner that I had got into a scrape and must take care of myself. They told me if I exposed them, they would destroy my character and business. Having on me the liabilities of the society and members of the church, to the amount of nearly two thousand dollars, I was convinced that what little I had earned would be stripped from me. I resolved to separate myself from these speculators and extortioners in the church and then take care of myself alone, according to Pratt's advice. June 14, I went into church meeting and asked them to *erase* my name from the church book. (4) I do not know that any one had any complaint against me in the church. Pratt and church chose a committee to labor with me. They chose Edwin Chase. Caleb Gage, Albert Adams, Joseph Couch and Stephen Whipple for this purpose. The three first named had not fulfilled their engagements which caused the whole trouble. They waited upon me the next day. I stated to them my complaint was their not paying for their meeting house stock and getting it saddled upon me. I told them that if they and others would pay their debts the trouble would end. (5) This they refused to report to the church. They then added Joel Brown, another member who had not paid for his subscribed stock and Chase Noyes. My story to the second committee was the same as before. This they refused to report to the church, simply because, as Dea. Chase said, it would criminate the committee.— In church meeting, on June 21, Lorenzo Dow asked the Committee to state to the church my reasons. These they refused to give. I then asked permission to state them myself. This request was put down by Pratt and not by the action of the church. Pratt told me "I had no right to answer Dow's inquiries," thereby criminating him and the committee. (6) What I wished to communicate, was, the above mentioned facts. Finding they were determined to destroy my character and not let

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me go with that single boon remaining, I withdrew my request to have my name erased resolving to abide a trial. (7) On July 26, the standing committee of the church visited me, consisting of Adams, Gage, Chase, and Howard. I refused to receive them and converse with them as a church committee—told them to carry any charges before the church and I would there answer them. The committee told me I *should not speak before the church.* (8) The committee presented charges to the church that evening. I appeared and asked the privilege of making my defence. The church voted that I should not ask even one question. (9) So they condemned and excommunicated me without a hearing. And why? to conceal their own criminality. So said Pratt and his committee. This is my version of the matter. I will now give Pratt's from his church records and sworn affidavit.

I, D. D. Pratt, of lawful age, depose, and say that I am now the Pastor and Clerk of the First Baptist church in Nashua, and have been six or seven years last past. I have kept the records of said church. "He (Calvin Cutter) was first received as a member of our church, Feb. 28, 1835, and was dismissed Nov. 6, 1836, for the pupose of becoming a member of the second church in said Nashua then about to be formed. So far as I knew he was considered in fair standing during that time. He was a member of the 2d Baptist church until he was received back by us as appears by my records. March 30, 1838, he brought a letter of dismission from the 2d church." "The next proceeding in the church in relation to Dr. Cutter was had June 14, 1838. A committee was chosen to converse with him, consisting of Edwin Chase, Stephen Whipple, Albert Adams, Caleb Gage, and Joseph Couch. The object of the appointment of this committee, as appears by the records, was 'to visit and converse with him and labor to convince him of the impropriety and unreasonableness of the request,' which was to withdraw from the church. [10] It appears by the records that he (Cutter) requested to withdraw:" he wished to accomplish his purpose which he had determined on several months before. [11] The committee reported June 15, 1838, that they had a long conversation with Dr. Cutter; they found little or no change in his mind or purposes: he would, however, keep back his request one week to see if the church would take such a course as to meet his view. [12] Voted that John Brown and Chase Noyes be added to the committee and that they be requested to labor faithfully and kindly with him and report at the next meeting.—The next meeting was June 21, 1838. The record of the last meeting was read and approved. The committee appointed to labor with Dr. Cutter reported that his mind and purpose seemed to remain about the same—he did not know but that he could walk with the church, if he could somehow be relieved from the *pecuniary obligations he had entered into in behalf of the second Baptist church.* [13] The committee stated that his complaint against

any society, or even against individual members of the church, they endeavored to make him feel were no valid reasons for breaking away from the church of Christ as such. Voted to accept the report of the committee. On the question whether the committee should continue their labor with him or not, it was voted to let the matter rest for a little time to see what course he would pursue with the hope that he would change his feelings and purposes. After this he [Cutter] requested an opportunity to make a statement to the church at this meeting or some other. The *church* told him that it would be out of order for him to make a statement *criminating persons*, as he said he intended to do, before visiting them in the manner laid down in the 18th chap. of Matt. [14] This he was not disposed to do. The church thought to give him leave to make such a statement, would be to give him leave to violate the laws of Christ. While the question was pending several brethren asked him some questions, upon which *he finally concluded to withdraw his request for dropping his name* [15] as unscriptural and improper. A very kind state of feeling seemed to pervade the meeting on the part of the church. The meeting adjourned with prayer by the Pastor.

The records of the next proceeding are July 26, 1838. At a full meeting of the church this evening held at the vestry for business, the standing committee introduced the following report, to wit. The standing committee of the first Baptist church having learned that Calvin Cutter had absented himself from the communion and avowed his intention not to walk with them, thereby giving his influence against the interest and peace of the church, the committee felt it their duty to visit him which they did last evening, and ask leave to make the following report.— He was asked why he left the communion of the church. To this we could get no definite reply. He also stated he should not feel himself under obligations to make answers to the committee, [16] but treated us with contempt, manifesting much hardness of feeling, not only towards ourselves, but towards some other members of the church. Conversation has been had with him by individuals of the committee and others in which he has said his intentions were not hastily made, but that nearly six months ago he determined to come back to the first church and if they did not comply with his wishes in every respect, to bring them to their senses, as he expressed it. He did not deny having declared that he should pursue such a course as would prove the overthrow of both churches. We labored to show him the extreme folly and heinousness of thus endeavoring to trample upon the church and the cause of Christ and that if he had anything against individuals he should pursue the gospel rule and not violate his covenant with the church. It is with regret we are compelled to say we could get no satisfaction, nor perceive any other spirit than that of schism, opposition and determined obstinacy. [Signed, E. Chase, A. Adams, C. Gage,

and E. Howard.] On motion, the above report was accepted. It was then voted to request the person named in it to retire while the church had considered the matter. It was then asked by the pastor and others whether any one desired this committee or any other to labor further with Calvin Cutter. No one requested it. The motion being made to withdraw the hand of church fellowship from Calvin Cutter for *having withdrawn from the church*, [17] the vote was taken in the usual way and decided in the affirmative with one dissenting vote. The church appointed brother Chase Noyes, and Stephen Whipple communicate to the person the doings of the church. The church seemed to be in a calm, prayerful, united and firm frame of mind, and after all kneeling in prayer, closed by singing, 'Blest be the tie.'—Dr. Cutter ceased to be a member from this time, and there is no further record of church proceedings in relation to him.—*There is no other church record than what has been given in relation to Dr. Cutter from March 30 to July 26, 1838.*" [18]—"I think there was a motion made [July 26, 1838,] that he (Cutter) should have a hearing and a privilege of making his statement; I think I put such motion. The vote was in the negative. [19]

Question by Cutter. "Who was the church that told me it would be out of order to make any statement criminating persons, on the evening of June 21, 1838." Ans. "Several expressed such an opinion, I had no objection, and I, as moderator, communicated it to the Doctor." [20]

The above is the verbatim testimony of D. D. Pratt, signed by him and sworn to before Isaac Spaulding, Nov. 20, 1838.

Now let us compare my statement with his testimony in several points.

[1] I have the subscription book for stock, where the name of C. S. Barnes is erased and Pratt's name is inserted, written by himself, for 3 shares.

[2] The same book contains the names of these gentlemen.

[3] [5] Compare my statement with the church record. [12] [13]

[4] Compare with Pratt's records, see [16]

[6] Compare this my statement with Pratt's records, see [14]

[7] Compare this withdrawal of my request with Pratt's statement. [15] Mark at the close of the church meeting Jan. 21, I was a member of the church unimpeached as Pratt's records show.

[8] In keeping with the evening's work.

[9] Compare this with Pratt's testimony, see [19]

[18] Compare this statement of Pratt's with [19.] Here any one can see that Pratt made false records by omitting to record the vote of the church depriving me of a hearing. Will any one say this vote was not important.

[20] Comparing Pratt's answer to my question with his church record, see [14,] any one can see that Pratt made false church

records by recording the remarks of individuals as the acts of the church. Did not Pratt do this for the purpose of slander? This I assert to be the case. He showed these false records to persons as the true records of all the real acts of the church.—Here is my evidence of this assertion. Pratt thus testifies on this point—"In some instances, (the church records of Dr. Cutter's case,) at the request of clergymen or other individual members of sister churches, they have been read." On this point, the Rev. M. Carpenter thus testifies, to wit: "Rev. D. D. Pratt, then pastor of a Baptist church in Nashua, at my request exhibited to me the records of the church in relation to the dealings of the church with Dr. Calvin Cutter, who had been a member." "I did not understand that any vote was passed by the church which was not recorded." Here is one fact clearly proved by the testimony of Pratt and Carpenter, to wit:—Pratt kept *false records* of his church doings; then showed these records, knowing them to be false, to bolster up his reputation and that of his church, by slandering me in thus exhibiting his church records as a true transcript of the doings of his church.

Let us look at the case of Benoni Cutter. He united with D. D. Pratt's church in the summer of 1837, and had a class in the Sabbath school. In October he gave up his class to Wm. Longdell, (now dead,) and went to Boston to attend medical lectures. He continued at Boston and Woodstock, Vt. until June, 1838, when he returned to Nashua. This was well known to Mr. Pratt. Soon my brother visited the Rev. Mr. Pratt and other members of the church, and commenced a labor with them for speculating, lying, cheating, and plainly told them he would expose their wickedness. About 11 o'clock, July 26, 1838, the standing committee visited him for the first time, and he was excluded in the evening of the same day. Here is the sworn testimony of Mr. Pratt relative to Benoni Cutter. Question by C. Cutter: "Had the church any proceeding with Benoni Cutter prior to this time, July 26, or at this time?" Ans. by Pratt: The pastor and members of the committee had conversed with him relative to his spirit and walk. Ques. Did the standing committee make a report on the case of Benoni Cutter, July 26, 1838? Ans. They did. Ques. Was any report made relative to Benoni Cutter prior to that time? Ans. There had been some talk, but no formal report. Ques. Had any individual previous to this announced to the church that they had any labor with him? Ans. I think there had—the pastor suggested that he had some conversation with him, he having withdrawn from the communion and Sabbath school, or rather taken himself off. (1) I am not able to say whether he was there or had been for several months connected with the Sabbath school. (2) I think he did not attend. He had been absent for a time and had been back, but how long I do not know. (3) I think the subject was brought up in church meeting. It was mentioned by the pastor among other things. I reported him to the church as an indi-

vidual under censure.(4) It was suggested that the standing committee ought to visit him and exercise their duty relative to him." "There is nothing on the records prior to the evening of July 26, against Benoni Cutter.(5) The committee made a report on that evening about Benoni Cutter, in writing. I should not think the church withdrew the hand of fellowship from him on the strength of that report. It was for *having withdrawn from the church.* Quite a number said they had not seen him at the communion, and not having seen him there, supposed him to be absent. They gave it as their opinion that he had withdrawn from the church. They were pretty well satisfied he had. (6) Ques. Was Benoni Cutter invited to show cause why he should not be expelled on the charges against him? Ans. I decline answering.

(1) Here note the charge of Pratt. Not attending communion or S. School.

(2) Here Pratt says he does not know of his being connected with the school for several months.

(3) Here he testifies Benoni had been absent. This Pratt shows he knew, yet he makes this a cause of censure.

(4) Here Pratt shows he was the complainant unequivocally.

(5) Here Pratt testifies that there is no charge recorded on the records against Benoni Cutter.

(6) Reader, look at the testimony of Pratt in the case of Benoni Cutter. Does it not bear the impress of a conspiracy to get rid of Benoni Cutter, to save themselves. Examine the whole testimony of Pratt, and say if it does not bear the impress of *perjury.* Did Pratt enter a complaint against Benoni Cutter for not attending communion without knowing whether he was in town at the time of his absence from communion? Did Pratt enter a complaint and not record it? No. Pratt never complained to the church, and hence no record. Probably he concerted the whole with his committee, Chase, Gage, and Adams.

Further to illustrate the conduct of D. D. Pratt and the church, I will take up the case of Lorenzo Dow. Dow had been connected with Pratt's church some years and was regarded as a valuable member. He paid one hundred dollars towards the second Baptist house. Since he was excommunicated, Mr. Pratt stated to the Rev. S. Curtis, that Dow's character was not impeached. The report of the standing committee of the First Baptist church, of July 26, contains the following: "He (Dr. Cutter,) did not deny having said that he should pursue such a course as would prove the destruction and overthrow of both churches." When the report of July 26 was put into my hands by Chase Noyes, on July 30, I told Noyes it was false. I asked my brother, Benoni Cutter, to visit each member of the committee, question them upon this point, and write their answers down verbatim.

BENONI CUTTER'S AFFIDAVIT.

"In conversation held with the following persons at different times, the following questions were asked, answers given, and statements made, viz.—On July 30, asked Caleb Cage if he knew who the person was to whom Calvin Cutter had declared that he would take such a course as would destroy both of the Baptist churches. He replied that he did not know who the person was that he had made such a statement to. Asked him whether Calvin Cutter denied having made such a statement when asked by one of the committee of the 1st Baptist church appointed to visit. He (Caleb Gage) replied that Calvin Cutter denied having made such a statement at that time, also when asked by Albert Adams, he (Calvin Cutter) replied, "it was false."

Asked Edwin Chase if he knew who the person was that Calvin Cutter had declared to that he would pursue such a course as would destroy both of the Baptist churches. He replied he did not know to whom he had made such a statement. Asked him whether Calvin Cutter had denied having made such a statement to him when he (Edwin Chase) asked him if he had made such a statement, at the time when the committee of the 1st Baptist church, appointed for that purpose, visited him. He (Edwin Chase) replied that he, (Calvin Cutter) then denied having made such a statement. Stated that he had always denied having made such a statement to him.

July 31. Asked Albert Adams if he knew to whom Calvin Cutter had declared he would take such a course as would destroy one or both of the Baptist churches. He replied that he did not. Asked him whether Calvin Cutter denied having made such a statement, when asked by one of the committee of the 1st Baptist church appointed to visit him. He replied, after some equivocation, that he believed he denied it in part.

Heard Calvin Cutter ask Ebenezer Howard whether he (Calvin Cutter) denied having declared that he would pursue such a course as would destroy both of the Baptist churches, when asked by Albert Adams at the time when the standing committee of the 1st Baptist church (on July 26) visited him, if he had previously so declared. He replied that he (Calvin Cutter) did not accede to it, but denied it.

BENONI CUTTER.

State of New Hampshire, Hillsborough ss.
Nashua, Aug. 3, 1838.

Then the aforesaid Benoni Cutter personally appeared and made oath that the foregoing statement by him subscribed, is in his belief true. Before me,

CHARLES J. FOX,
Justice of the Peace.

L. Dow visited each member of the committee individually, and asked them if they made the above statements to Benoni Cutter. Upon this point I give the certificate of Dow.

New Boston, Aug. 29, 1841.

This may certify that I, Lorenzo Dow, was a member of the 1st Baptist church in Nashua, on July 26, 1839, and that I did complain of the standing committee of said church, to wit, Albert Adams, Edwin Chase, Caleb Gage, and Ebenezer Howard, for making an untrue report to said church in the case of Calvin Cutter. This I did in open church meeting after having visited each member of the committee, some of whom confessed to me that the report contained what was not true, and admitted that they confessed the same to Benoni Cutter, to which he, Benoni Cutter, made oath. The church voted not to investigate any complaint against said committee, but voted to exclude me from the church the same evening for not attending meeting and communion when I was absent from town, visiting my brother, they knowing such to be the fact. I think the above to be true.

LORENZO DOW.

I ask the community to examine this transaction. The committee make a false report, and get me excluded on that report. They then admit the report to be false, and are complained of to the church for making said report. The church, under Pratt's guidance, vote to screen the committee, and to make the situation of Pratt and committee secure, exclude the complainant Dow. This was done to prevent an investigation into the before described lying, speculating, and swindling. Yet Pratt and the church are fellowshipped and protected by the Baptist ministers and churches.

At the close of the statement of my case I showed Pratt kept false records. In this case his records are made falsely in all probability. Most likely he has not recorded the complaint of Dow against the *standing church committee* for *lying*, and the vote of the church not to investigate the matter. Either his records are false, or they show the action of the church to sustain their committee in making false reports. Let the candid and truth loving examine the above transaction.

Pratt desired to get rid of Nathaniel Sleeper and family, and to effect this he made letters of dismission, as the following will show, to wit :

This certifies that the Rev. D. D. Pratt, on the afternoon of Nov. 1, 1838, made out letters of dismission for members of his church, which letters they refused taking, having never asked said letters of the church or Pratt. We, the undersigned, were the above named members.

J. E. SLEEPER,
M. E. SLEEPER,
S. J. SLEEPER.

He then abused them by using vile and indecent language, and then put them under church censure, and excommunicated them at the same time and way with Mrs. Cutter, and for the same charges, without a single particle of investigation.

I now take up the case of Mrs. Cutter. On the evening of Sept. 28, 1838, she obtained permission by the unanimous vote of the church then convened to present a communication to the church. It was read by Deacon Albert Adams. After reading it, he (Adams) declared publicly, in the *same church meeting*, that every statement was a *falsehood.* In this Adams was sustained by Mr. Pratt. I give the following testimony to sustain this charge.

This certifies that I attended the meeting of the 1st Baptist church in Nashua on the evening of Sept. 28, 1838. Mrs. C. H. Cutter attended and asked permission to present a communication to the church. This was granted by a unanimous vote. Then Mrs. Cutter's communication was read by Deacon Albert Adams. After reading the same, he (Adams) declared all the statements in it to be a *falsehood* from beginning to end. Rev. D. D. Pratt said of the communication, he would not say a word of it was true for all the stars in the firmament, no, not for my right hand. This I wrote down at the time, being present.

MARY E. SLEEPER.

Hillisborough ss. Sept. 2, 1841.

Then personally appeared the above named Mary E. Sleeper, and made oath that the above statement by her subscribed, is true. Before me, DANIEL ABBOT, Justice of the Peace.

I, Nathaniel Sleeper, certify that I have read the above statement signed by my daughter, Mary E. Sleeper. I further certify that I was present at the meeting referred to, and that the facts therein stated by the said Mary are true.

NATHANIEL SLEEPER.

Hillsborough ss. Sept 2, 1841.

Then the before mentioned Nathaniel Sleeper personally appeared and made oath that the foregoing certificate by him signed is true.

Before me, DANIEL ABBOT, Justice of the Peace.

After being thus publicly charged with falsehood, Mrs. Cutter presented the following request.

Nashua, Oct. 10, 1838.

To the first Baptist church in Nashua. In consequence of my being charged in church meeting of making false statements on the 28th ult. I desire the church to enter into and pursue a candid and impartial examination of the matter.

Yours, &c. C. H. CUTTER.

The church voted to indefinitely postpone this requested investigation. This assertion I sustain by the following from the sworn affidavit of D. D. Pratt, to wit. "The communication written by Mrs. Cutter, and read at a church meeting in Sept.

1838, is not in my possession. The subject to which the paper related was *indefinitely postponed* by the church." Mrs. Cutter was made sick by the above brutal conduct, and apparently brought near the grave, by treatment worse than murder by the cold steel. When she recovered, she scorned to remain in connection with, or receive a recommendation from, a minister and church who would set at nought the ninth commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." She sent the following note to the church.

Nashua, Nov. 1, 1838.

To the 1st Baptist church in Nashua:—Whereas certain statements made by me in church meeting, on the eve of Sept. 28, were declared to be false by brethren then present, and whereas my request to the church for an investigation of the same, has been disregarded, and whereas it is contrary to the rules of the church, which I do not wish violated, to dismiss a member without recommending him or her to some other church, therefore I solemnly and sincerely request you to excommunicate me from your body. C. H. CUTTER.

The following was the action of the church on the above.

To Mrs. C. H. CUTTER:—

Dear sister, I am instructed by the first Baptist church, to inform you of a vote of the church which passed unanimously in relation to you, on the 27th day of Nov. in consequence of your having *withdrawn from the church* and *neglected* the *ordinances* of the gospel. The vote was as follows, viz. that you having violated your covenant obligations to the church, are therefore under the censure of the church and suspended from church privileges until you return and evince your sorrow by a humble confession. Yours truly, CHASE NOYES.

Nashua, Dec. 3, 1838.

Mrs. Cutter left Nashua, and took no notice of them or their church labors. After she removed to Dover, they sent the following to her.

Nashua, April 24, 1839.

Mrs. Caroline H. Cutter—At a full meeting of the first Baptist church this evening, held at the vestry, it was voted unanimously to *withdraw* the *hand* of *fellowship* from you, for having withdrawn from the church.

Per order, JOHN C. HILDRETH, *Committee to inform.*

Now look at the above transaction. Mrs. Cutter makes certain statements in church meeting. Pratt and Adams declare such statements to be *false*. Now it is plain, either *Mrs. Cutter lied*, or *Pratt* and *Adams* lied. The church voted to keep the *liars* in their body without censure by *indefinitely postponing* the matter. To render the liars secure they gag Mrs. Cutter by

putting her under church censure for "neglecting the ordinances of the gospel," when confined by sickness, caused by the brutality of Pratt and Adams in church meeting. To close the drama, they exclude Mrs. Cutter, not for *lying*, but "*for having withdrawn from the church.*" Although Pratt and the church are thus guilty, they are *protected*, *fellowshipped*, and *sustained* by all the Baptist ministers, church members, and churches in New Hampshire.

The Rev. D. D. Pratt, M. Carpenter, Lucien Hayden, E. E. Cummings, Benj. Brierly, Phineas Richardson, and others have said much against my moral character and that of Mrs. Cutter. They have represented our characters as very bad. They have made many slanderous nods, shakes of the head, winks, and bold assertions. I say nothing in defence of my moral character or that of Mrs. Cutter. I regret that it is not better. I regret that in this controversy I have said and done very many things that are wrong. Still, permit me to introduce the testimony of my slanderers in favor of the soundness of my moral character. Feb. 28, 1835, Nov. 6, 1836, March 30, 1838. The first Baptist church of Nashua, by receiving and dismissing me without a dissenting vote, declared my moral character to be good, they being judges. June 10, 1838, Mr. Pratt gave me the following certificate:

Nashua, June 10, 1838.

To whom it may concern,

The bearer, Dr. Calvin Cutter, has been an inhabitant of this place for a number of years last past, and sustains among our people a good moral character.

D. D. Pratt, *Pastor of the first Baptist church.*

June 14, 1838, Pratt has recorded that the church labor commenced. July 26, 1838, they excluded me unheard, not for *immorality* but for "*having withdrawn from the church.*" April 24, 1839, Mrs. Cutter was cut off not for *lying*, as Pratt and Adams had accused her, but for "*having withdrawn from the church.*" Benoni Cutter was cut off July 26, 1838, not for *wickedness*, but for "*having withdrawn from the church.*" Lorenzo Dow was excluded for "*having withdrawn from the church;*" the Sleeper family was kicked out for "*having withdrawn from the church;*" yet in all these cases and many others, the charge of "*having withdrawn from the church,*" was an *intentional falsehood* on the part of the first Baptist church in Nashua. They and the Baptist ministers who fellowship them know it full well.

Some will say this matter ought not to be made public. It will hurt the cause. It will render the church unpopular. It will make infidels. If the foregoing be true, ought the Baptist church to be popular? Will not the ministers and churches to whom I have appealed be held accountable at the judgment day for all the evils that accrue to the community and individuals from this

publication? At different times I have made the following propositions, to wit.—On June 15, 1838, I proposed to the committee to refer the whole matter to a committee of *Baptist ministers* chosen by the church. This was refused. On the second day of Aug. I proposed to Edwin Chase before witness to refer the whole matter to a mutual committee composed of persons either in or out of the church. This was refused. On the 25th of Feb. 1839, I proposed to Wm. Wallace, Calvin Averill, and Deacon Putnam of Milford, to refer the controversy in all its parts to a mutual council. This they said was fair. Wm. Wallace agreed to transmit my proposition to the Nashua church, and notify me of their answer. This agreement Wallace *intentionally broke.* I then appealed to every church in the Milford Association, for an exparte council to examine certain specific charges against Pratt and church. The following is the only answer I received, to wit:

Milford, March 16, 1838.

Sir—In answer to a letter from you directed to the Baptist church in Milford, bearing date Feb. 28, 1839, the undersigned, the prudential committee of the church, after prayer and careful deliberation, would say that they have no authority or right, as a church or individuals, to interfere or meddle with the acts or regulations of any other church, and you need not longer expect any service of this kind from us.

Ebenezer Pearsons,
Andrew Hutchinson,
Calvin Averill,
Geo. Raymond.

Thus the committee defended Pratt by keeping the Milford church ignorant—two of Pratt's relatives being on the committee, Geo. Raymond and Calvin Averill. I then called upon the Milford Baptist Association—The Portsmouth Association, by the hand of Lucien Hayden of Dover—The Baptist State Convention—for an investigation of this matter. In all these instances, no examination has been obtained. I then appealed to the Baptist Church in Milford for an investigation of this matter. The following is their answer.

Milford, Dec. 26, 1839.

Dr. Cutter, Sir—I am directed by the Baptist church in Milford, to inform you that we have nothing to do with the Nashua church, nor with your difficulty with them, and shall not consent to receive any communication from you on the subject, nor have any thing to do with the affair. Wm. Wallace, *Ch. Clerk.*

I then applied to the Baptist church in Dover for an exparte committee, offering to pay all the expenses of such investigation. This was refused.

I then sent the following to the Baptist church in Nashua, by Josephus Baldwin, Esq.—

"The following proposition I transmit to the first Baptist church in Nashua, by Josephus Baldwin :

"Upon an investigation, fair and impartial as the circumstances will permit, I am ready to make confession of, and make resstitution for all errors, so far as in my power, to individuals and the church, upon being convinced of my error, by a candid hearing before fair and disinterested men. Yours, &c.

"Nashua, July 10, 1840. CALVIN CUTTER.

"If we cannot agree upon fair and impartial men, I will agree to mutually select a committee who shall select a committee to act as final umpires." The above was not accepted.

Sept. 23, 1840, I applied to the Milford Baptist Association, convened at Milford, to bring the controversy before this body. Pratt was moderator. He refused to let me state my business, but called for an officer to arrest me and carry me out of the house. My witnesses were present to sustain my charges against him and church.

Notwithstanding I have made the above mentioned propositions, which have been rejected, I now make the following, to wit.—I will refer this controversy in all its parts to a committee mutually selected. The parties being bound to abide the decision of such committee. If any person or church sees fit to comply with this proposition, and I do not prove to the satisfaction of the committee, the charges, substantially, which I have made against the Rev. Mr. Pratt and church, I will pay such persons all their expenses and time spent in such investigation. I will get satisfactory bondsmen to see the fulfilment of this last offer. If any one believes that Pratt and church are not guilty, let them defend him by entering into an investigation, and if such persons will not do it, let such persons remain silent, whether they be ministers, church members, or others.

In consequence of the peculiar position of Mrs. Cutter, they have followed her with unrelenting and malicious persecution, destroying her character, her happiness and her life. At her *Funeral* in Milford, the proceedings of the Baptist church in relation to her together with the charge of having been destroyed by the action of the Baptist church, were read by the Rev. H. Moore, of Milford. The destruction of Mrs. Cutter was found to be necessary by the Baptist church, from the fact that her communication, read in church meeting by Albert Adams, Sep. 28, 1838, containing the following statements: — an investigation of which would have ruined Pratt and the church.

The statements are as follows:—

1st. "That Adams, Chase and others did not pay their meeting house stock notes when they became due.

2d. In consequence of such non-payment, money was hired of Wm. Wallace and others for which I gave my note.

3d. That I was compelled to pay Wallace and others, my property being attached by Wallace and by him sold.

4th. That when excommunicated by the church, that I was deprived of a hearing by vote of the church.

5th. That the communication of the church committee, contained false statements relative to me.

Against such proceedings she protested, and demanded an investigation of the whole matter, the parties being brought face to face. The above statements and positions, Pratt and Adams declared to be false, in church meeting — did Mrs. Cutter lie, or did Adams and Pratt, is the question? To the facts. 1st. Pratt purchased Adams' stock twelve months after the note became due and then the note was paid by Pratt, notwithstanding the Rev. buyer, and selling deacon denied it. This, Pratt has confessed to Mark Carpenter.

2d. 3d. The Hillsborough County Records show that my property was sold by Wallace. The suit being advised by Pratt.

4th. Pratt swears upon this matter in these words, to wit: "there was a motion made July 26, that he (Cutter) should have a hearing and the privilege of making his statement. I put such motion—the vote was in the negative."

5th. Mrs. Cutter's statement is sustained by the testimony of Benoni Cutter and Lorenzo Dow. Let the community judge upon the 4th and 5th statements from the testimony, who is the *liar*, Mrs. Cutter or Pratt and Adams.

Having briefly stated the leading facts, let us see who are the guilty ones and the amount of guilt. 1st. Pratt and Adams made the charge of lying, against Mrs. Cutter. For this, at the time, they alone were responsible. When upon the application of Mrs. Cutter for an investigation, the church voted "to indefinitely postpone the matter," as Pratt swears they did,—they in effect voted to brand Mrs. C. a liar, to destroy her character, her happiness and her life. Every member of that church at that time became a participator in the vile deed, the foul *murder!* They collectively and individually, are guilty of all the results of thus publicly in church meeting branding Mrs. Cutter an infamous felon. All who have joined them since, as Josephus Baldwin, Wm. D. Beasom and wife have endorsed the same and are equally guilty. Some may ask how is this MURDER, even if Mrs. Cutter's life has been destroyed, as alleged. I answer as follows: If Pratt had given Mrs. Cutter *arsenic* to accomplish his purpose, with intention to injure her, to make her a little sick, so that no investigation be had of the truth of her communication—but not with the thought of taking life and it did kill her, it would be clearly murder; for the reason that there was malicious intent to injure, in giving the *poison*, and having such intent, he is answerable for all the effects of the poison.

In the case of Mrs. Cutter, Pratt and the church intentionally and maliciously destroyed her character and standing in the church and society—they with malicious intent destroyed her peace of mind, her happiness. They thus impaired her health, caused suffering and sickness, and destroyed her life. As their acts were deliberate and malicious, pursued without mitigation or relaxation while she lived, it is as clearly a case of murder as if they had given *arsenic* to effect their purposes. Will the candid and honest examine this affair and then mete to Pratt and church what they merit.

If Pratt and church are guilty, how stands the other Baptist churches in New Hampshire. Some assert they are not implicated, being independent. Let us examine this matter and learn how they stand.

1st. The relation of one church to another. It is important to understand this relation. When the Baptist church at Nashua was constituted, some one in behalf of the neighboring Baptist churches gave the right hand of fellowship, pledging the fellowship, countenance and support of the Baptist churches so long as they (the Nashua church) demeaned themselves in accordance with the gospel principles as understood and practised by the Baptist churches, at the same time pledging to admonish, to rebuke, and withdraw the hand of fellowship, aid and countenance when the Nashua Baptist church deviates from the Baptist platform, in doctrine, faith or practice.

When the Nashua Baptist church was admitted into the Milford Baptist Association, a similar pledge was given by the Moderator of the Association in the giving of the right hand of fellowship. When D. D. Pratt was ordained the right hand of fellowship was given by one of the ordaining council in behalf of the churches represented by delegates in the council. At this time a solemn pledge was given to rebuke, admonish, and to withdraw the hand of fellowship, aid and countenance whenever he (Pratt) should depart from the path of rectitude. Here we see a three-fold pledge has been given and made binding by the parties, calling men, angels, and Jehovah to witness the solemn obligation not to countenance or to continue to fellowship the Nashua church or D. D. Pratt in intentional sin and iniquity of any kind. I challenge any one to controvert these positions. The records of your churches and your association show these things to be so. In addition to the above, we find an article in the Constitution of the Baptist association, which reads as follows, to wit: "although as an associated body we utterly disclaim all power over the churches, so far as it respects the interference with their independence and discipline, yet we deem it our privilege to judge for *ourselves* of the propriety of continuing any church in our connexion which to us shall appear heterodox in principle or irregular in practice. In order however that we may not dissolve connexion without sufficient reason it is proposed that when a complaint is made by any two mem-

bers of this body against a church belonging to this association, they shall appoint a Committee who shall request a conference with the said church in order to obtain satisfaction on the points which formed the subject of complaint, and their result shall be reported to the next meeting of the Association, in order that it may then decide." Again, the following was adopted as the sentiments of the Milford Baptist church, viz: "Whereas it is the duty of the church to turn against every *sin* by expression and action, therefore resolved—That since it is the duty of the church to separate itself from all sin we cannot maintain church fellowship with any who hold slaves."

JOHN G. RICHARDSON, *Moderator.*
Wm. Waller, Clerk.

A similar position has been assumed by the New Ipswich Baptist church.

In view of the above solemnly asserted principles of the Baptist church, applications have been made to every church in the Milford Association, as separate churches, to grant redress to Mrs. Cutter by an investigation. Applications have been made to the Dover Baptist church, the Milford and Portsmouth association, to the Baptist State Convention of New Hampshire, for an investigation and redress of Mrs. Cutter's wrongs. All these bodies have refused an investigation. The evidence of the facts as I have given in this pamphlet have been furnished to every Baptist minister and Baptist church in the State—well knowing the facts, the Baptist ministers and Baptist churches have countenanced and supported and still support and countenance the transactions detailed in this pamphlet, and excepting such aid and support be continued, Pratt and the Nashua church cannot stand one month. This, many of the ministers acknowledge.—By this support they are guilty of the oppression and destruction of Mrs. Cutter.

But some may ask how is this made out. I will explain by an illustration. When the wretched Knapps were hung at Salem for the murder of the aged White, it was well known they did not strike the blow—they did not see the blood flow—they did not see the fatal blow given—they were not in the house—they did not see the pallid face and hear the dying groan. They only shielded Crowninshield, by being ready to give warning of danger, that the citizens might not catch and crush the guilty murderer. Their aid was very valuable to the acting murderer.—Their watchful care gave him courage, gave him strength, gave him security and protection. For thus aiding, they were indicted for murder, tried by a Jury of their County, convicted of murder and hung. I will now apply the illustration. After having crippled Mrs. Cutter in body, mind and character in Sept. 1838, the continued countenance, fellowship and support of the Baptist ministers, and entire refusal to investigate, enabled and encouraged Pratt and church to repeat another blow the follow-

ing 24th of April. The refusal of the Baptist ministers and churches to investigate this matter encouraged and sustained Pratt and church in following Mrs. Cutter to Dover, and there crush her character. Had Calvin Averill and Wm. Wallace, instead of going to James Johnson after that he had gone to bed and telling Johnson and wife things to slander Cutter and wife, which Averill has since acknowledged to be false, spent half the time in getting a fair investigation, Mrs. Cutter had not been destroyed.

Had the Rev. Mark Carpenter refused to make false statements in defence of Pratt, which were proved to be false by Pratt's handwriting at James Johnson's, before Calvin Averill and Dea. Putnam, had he exhibited a christian temper in place of the *murderous spirit* contained in the following expression made by Carpenter to James Johnson, tha wit: "I (Carpenter) think as the good old Deacon Pearson does, they have got Cutter down and it is best to keep him down," Mrs. Cutter would not have died the horrid death which she has. Had the Committee of the Milford church, consisting of Calvin Averill, Geo. Raymond, A. Hutchinson and E. Parsons, and the Milford church granted a hearing to Mrs. Cutter, who was a member of the Milford church more than ten years, the inscription of your murderous doings had not been placed upon her tomb-stone.— Had Benjamin Kidder and the other members of the Milford association in 1840 exhibited common humanity and common courtesy, had they not driven her from the meeting a crushed and writhing victim, when permission was asked to bring her case before the body, her babe would not have been a motherless child. Had the Rev. John Richardson and the other clergymen assembled at the N. H. B. State Convention in 1841, at Northwood, adopted and acted from a more moral sentiment than that expressed by the Rev. Mr. Graves of Claremont, to wit: "If he knew that brother Pratt was guilty of all the charges against him he would not say a word about it for it would hurt Pratt's influence," (this sentiment was uttered at Worcester, Nov. 3, 1842,) Mrs. Cutter's midnight groans had been removed by health and not by death. This statement of Graves is the secret of the whole matter. Graves on that day admitted Pratt was guilty, and so have scores of others that sustain Pratt.— Hundreds have admitted that an investigation would restore Mrs. Cutter, but it would destroy Pratt and church. A blood stained church is dearer to them than human life. The Baptist ministers and churches in N. H. have given character to Pratt and church and still do. They refuse to investigate, knowing the guilt of this concern. They refuse to say a word against it, because it will hurt Pratt's influence, as Graves says. They admit as does Joshua Hutchinson of Milford, that Mrs. Cutter has been destroyed by this movement, and yet they countenance and fellowship them. By their watch-care and fellowship, the Baptist ministers and churches have as effectually played the part of ac-

cessaries and murderers in this transaction as did the Knapps at Salem. Knapp knew the wrong and violence that was being done the aged White. The Baptists knew the wrong and violence that was inflicted upon Mrs. Cutter. The evidence was given them under the solemnity of an oath, to wit: the testimony of Pratt, Nathaniel Sleeper, Mary E. Sleeper and Benoni Cutter. They knew that her character, her happiness and her life were being destroyed, and they would not say a word against it for it would hurt Pratt's influence, and they had got the poor woman down and it was best to keep her down.

If Pratt is guilty of wrong and his church so is every Baptist minister and church in N. H., and so will continue as things now remain. I ask the community to examine this proceeding and decide if the ministers and churches are guilty.

To recapitulate. 1st. Do the Baptist ministers and churches countenance LYING? Some may say this charge is a mere assertion. To such I would say, look at the testimony of Benoni Cutter and Lorenzo Dow, upon the report of the church committee. Look at the testimony of Nathaniel Sleeper, Mary E. Sleeper and D. D. Pratt in the case of Mrs. Cutter, and if lying is not directly sanctioned I see not how it can be. Again, Pratt testified that the votes of the church are not all recorded. He testifies to a vote not recorded and to records of church action which he says was individual opinion and expression. He testifies that these false records were shown in these words, to wit: "the records of the doings of the church in the case of Calvin Cutter, were shown to ministering brethren." Mark Carpenter testifies they were shown to him as the true record of the doings of the church. If this does not fix keeping false church records upon Pratt, and the showing of such false records to sustain himself and church, I know not what will.

Pratt swears positively that I was condemned without a hearing. The question to be settled is—do the Baptist churches have and practice upon the principle of condemning unheard? I answer they do. Upon this point Pratt testifies that "the action of the church was not in an unusual manner" in condemning me unheard. Mark Carpenter testifies to the rule of the Baptist church in these words, to wit: January 3, 1840, "The church may receive and act upon the report of their standing committee as conclusive evidence of the facts reported, and upon such report, censure or excommunicate an individual" without further hearing. If we can believe Pratt and Carpenter, under oath, it is the rule of the Baptists to condemn unheard. Such is the practice in many churches. If I had given the same testimony to sustain the charge of sprinkling an infant, or communing with sprinkled persons it would have led to his being cut off from the denomination.

Why does not the same testimony carry him out of the denomination for condemning persons unheard? The simple and most obvious answer is, that by so doing he has violated no rule of

the Baptist denomination. The rule is, to condemn unheard. Every minister of the Baptist denomination sustains this secret rule. They find it very useful to them. It gives them power over their members. By this they can keep them in the traces. By this rule they are protected in LICENTIOUSNESS. For if they are like to be exposed, they will excommunicate the member by the secret gag rule. Then they become safe, for the brethren are instructed not to believe an excommunicated person. This in the cry in the case of Mrs. Cutter. This rule gives them power over every woman in their church. This power is in the hands and is wielded by the minister and standing committee. [See the testimony of Carpenter.] This rule is the instrument of torture in the Baptist Inquisition. It is as effectual as the torturing instruments of the Spanish Inquisition. This rule is wielded by the Baptist ministers, as the Inquisition was wielded by the Pope of Rome to crush *heretics*. Mrs. Cutter was crushed and murdered by this rule—and as Pratt says, for the "good and peace of the church." Compare this rule as sworn to by Pratt and Carpenter, with the following from the Constitution of N. Hampshire: "no subject shall be held to answer for any crime or offence, until the same is fully, plainly, substantially and formally described to him, or be compelled to furnish evidence against himself, and every subject shall have a right to produce all proofs that may be favorable to him, to meet evidence face to face and to be freely heard in his defence by himself or his counsel at his election, and no subject shall be arrested, imprisoned, despoiled or deprived of his property or privileges, put out of the protection of the law, exiled, or deprived of his life, liberty or estate, but by the judgment of his peers or law of the land." Now read the Baptist rule, as sworn to by Mark Carpenter, before S. F. Livermore, January 3, 1840. "A church may receive and act upon the report of the standing committee, as conclusive evidence of the facts reported, and upon such report, censure or excommunicate an individual." Pratt swears thus, "there was a motion made that he (Cutter) should have a hearing and the privilege of making his statement. I put such motion. The vote was in the negative." Again he swears, "the report of the standing committee in the case of Cutter was not in an unusual manner, and the action of the church upon the report was not in an unusual manner." By the Constitution, every man knows his accuser, the charges preferred, hears the evidence, introduces his own witnesses and is heard in his defence. By the Baptist rule he is not allowed to know his accusers, or the charges, hear the evidence, or speak in his defence. Some of the Baptists may yet deny this as a fact. Well if you will not take this horn of the dilemma you must take another. It is this—Pratt and Carpenter have sworn to this rule falsely, to the scandal of the denomination, if not true. The Nashua church and other churches have excommunicated persons in accordance with it. This you know from tes-

timony given you, while you still countenance, aid and fellowship them in so doing. By your church and christian fellowship with the actors, you do not declare it heterodox in principle, or irregular in practice—you have knowingly permitted Mrs. Cutter to be murdered by the action of a rule that was your duty to have crushed. If it be not the rule of the Baptist church, you retain Pratt and Carpenter in your fellowship after having committed PERJURY. But it is your rule, and proved so as above, and from another fact, to wit: your refusal to grant a committee of investigation. Since this commenced, the Rev. J. Atwood obtained an exparte committee of investigation upon another subject in the Milford association. How would the Baptists have been situated if a committee had examined this matter? Thus if the testimony of Pratt is true, the denomination would have been compelled to openly and publicly declare that the Baptists condemn people unheard, or they would have been compelled to sustain Mrs. Cutter, putting down Pratt and the Nashua church. The former you have acknowledged would sustain the rule to condemn unheard, but it would destroy the Baptist churches. The latter would destroy Pratt and the Nashua church. No investigation would keep down Cutter and his wife. The safety of the secret rule and ministry is obtained at the same time. If a judge upon the civil bench should condemn a vile murderer unheard, ten shousand bayonets would leap from their scabbards, he would be hurled from his seat and stripped of the Judicial ermine. Still the ten thousand Baptists in N. H. maintain the rule and practice of condemning unheard in their churches. To sustain this rule they stripped me of some thousand dollars of property, my reputation, my business. They reduced my wife to poverty and wretchedness. So poor were we made, that her cloak was taken to make me a coat; the bed upon which she lay when sick, from abuse received in church meeting, from Pratt and Adams, was sold to pay the Baptist Meetinghouse debts.—So low were we reduced, that Carpenter, Pratt, Richardson, Raymond, Wallace, Averill and others said we had nothing, and were not worth minding. Amidst midnight moans and groans, she ended her life a victim to the Baptist rule of condemning persons unheard, as sworn to by Pratt and Carpenter and sustained by all the Baptist clergymen and churches in New Hampshire. She lies in Milford church yard, with this inscription upon a marble slab at the head of her lowly resting place, to wit: "Caroline H. Cutter—murdered by the Baptist ministry and Baptist churches, as follows: Sept. 23, 1833, she was accused of lying in church meeting, by the Rev. D. D. Pratt and Deacon Albert Adams—was condemned by the church unheard. She was reduced to poverty by Deacon Wm. Wallace. When an exparte council was asked of the Milford Baptist church, by the advice of their committee, George Raymond, Calvin Averill and Andrew Hutchinson, 'they voted not to receive any communication upon the subject.' The Rev. Mark Carpenter said he

thought as the good old Deacon Pearson said "we have got Cutter down and it is best to keep him down." The intentional and malicious destruction of her character and happiness, as above described, destroyed her life. Her last words upon the subject were 'tell the truth and the iniquity will come out.'"

Notwithstanding, two of the leading members of the Nashua Baptist church have made BLOODY threats that if I did not stop in this matter "*they would close my mouth as they had the mouth of my wife.*" Notwithstanding, one of the Milford church has recently said that if I did not quit this matter "*they would serve me as they had Mrs. Cutler.*" I appeal to you that are fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. I appeal to you that are mothers, wives, sisters and daughters, upon this matter. I appeal to you as men and women, as christians, as lovers of country and friends of humanity. Will you sustain a ministry and a church that sustains a rule to condemn unheard? Will you sustain a religious denomination wherever the "poor" the "lowly" "not worth minding" can be condemned without a hearing. I ask you as democratic republicans, which will you countenance and sustain, the Constitution of your State that protects every one in their property, character and person, and by which no one can be condemned without a full hearing? or the Baptist ministry and church that destroys property, character and life, that condemns unheard. Your attendance upon their meetings, your remaining in their churches, uniting with their church, gives countenance and support to the practice and principle of condemning unheard, as much as it does to the principle and practice of immersion, upon a profession of faith. This the ministers know and admit. CALVIN CUTTER.

MAY 1, 1843.

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